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ABSTRACT

The reading teacher needs to gather information on the many ways to emphasize student comprehension and application in the reading curriculum. Tenets from educational psychology need to be followed in teaching and learning situations to assist students to achieve as much as individual abilities permit. This paper cites 10 things that the teacher should do to help students retain ideas gleaned from reading. The paper states that, from content read, students may write poetry (with teacher guidance). It describes and illustrates the types of simple rhymed verse, such as the couplet, the triplet, the quatrain, and the limerick, that students may write. In addition to rhymed verse, the paper discusses the haiku, a well known form of unrhymed poetry based on syllables, the tanka, and free verse. According to the paper, students need to use and apply what has been read, since it aids in retention with continued use, it makes learning practical, it helps to expand learning acquired to a new contextual use, it assists students to perceive value in what has been learned, and it guides students to use words in diverse kinds of written work. The paper stresses that teachers should help students use content acquired in reading by introducing new objectives, learning opportunities, and assessment procedures. It finds that, in assessing student achievement pertaining to what has been read, a portfolio may be implemented and developed. (NKA)

Making Use of Ideas Gleaned From Reading.

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MAKING USE OF IDEAS GLEANED FROM READING

It is important for pupils to make use of ideas obtained from reading subject matter. A lack of retention occurs if use is not made of ideas presently possessed. The reading teacher then needs to gather information on a plethora of ways to emphasize pupil comprehension and application in the reading curriculum. Tenets from educational psychology need to be followed in teaching and learning situations to assist pupils to achieve as much as individual abilities permit. Thus, the reading teacher needs to

1. engage pupils in learning. Passive recipients of knowledge is not adequate, but active involvement is desired so that intrinsic pupil motivation is in evidence.

2. cultivate the interests of pupils in achieving. Interested pupils achieve more optimally as compared to those who lack interest. The teacher then needs to use learning opportunities which stimulate feelings of interest within pupils.

3. secure purposes for learning, developed within pupils. Purpose involves pupils perceiving reasons for achieving. Taking time for clarity in purposes for learning is time well spent. Pupils need to be clear on what is to be studied and why.

4. assist pupils to attach meaning to ongoing activities and experiences. Non-sense subject matter acquired has little value for pupils, but that which possesses meaning makes sense to each pupil. Meaningful learning provides understandable subject matter acquired. What does not make sense to the pupil is soon forgotten (See Emery, 1992).

5. use alternative teaching strategies for those pupils who have not been successful with a previous procedure. Pupils individually differ from each other in a plethora of ways. The teacher needs to possess a repertoire of methods and approaches of reaching each pupil in learning and in achieving.

6. meet the learning styles of pupils individually. Individual and committee endeavors need to be used in teaching and learning situations (See Searson and Dunn, 2001).

7. use multiple intelligences theory adequately when designing the curriculum. Pupils individually have talents which need to be cultivated. These talents or intelligences may be used by pupils to reveal that which has been learned in an ongoing lesson or unit of study (Gardner, 1993).

8. indicate the relationship of knowledge from diverse academic disciplines. Thus, subject matter should not be compartmentalized into component categories, but rather become interdisciplinary in nature (Ediger, 1993, 17-20).

9. help students develop wholesome attitudes toward the reading curriculum. The attitudinal dimension is vital to achieve in a positive manner since pupil achievement in reading depends so much upon affective predispositions learners possess in learning to read.

10. guide learners to use and apply what has been attained in subject matter and skills acquired. How can the reading teacher assist pupils to make use of ideas gleaned from reading?

Writing Poetry

From content read, pupils with teacher guidance may write poetry. There are diverse kinds to write. Rhymed verse offers interest in learning opportunities for selected pupils. The simplest form of rhyme in poetry is the couplet. The couplet has two lines, somewhat uniform in length. Many pupils with appropriate background information enjoy writing a couplet by the self or cooperatively with another, one giving the first line and the other learner the second line. From a single reading selection, pupils might think of diverse possibilities in using subject matter to write a poem. Whichever type of poem taught needs to be modeled by the teacher (Ediger, 1998, 74-77). The teacher may then

1. read aloud the kind of poem being emphasized.
2. write on the chalkboard the kind of poem being taught in order that pupils may discover and notice essentials contained therein, such as in a particular kind of rhymed verse, be it couplets, triplets, quatrains, and limericks, among others.
3. have library books on the specific type of verse being taught for personal and for pupil use.

In supervising student teachers in the public schools, a couplet written by two third graders, pertaining to a story on fishing, wrote the following:

Three boys with hook, line, and sinker
loved to catch fish in a pond and then tinker.

A second type of rhymed verse for pupils to write is the triplet. A class of fourth grade pupils read and discussed a story on mining for minerals. They collectively brainstormed a poem on that topic and wrote the following triplet containing three lines of rhymed verse:

a miner in moving westward ho!
came upon a mound along a row
found fortune, fame, and treasure to tow.

A separate set of three fourth graders cooperatively wrote the following triplet:

brave miners with pick, shovel, and effort
walked and ran a long way to the distant port
hoping to find gold, silver, and a precious sort.

Poetry written by pupils needs to be on their individual developmental levels. They need to experience challenge and high expectations, but success in achievement is also very important. There are selected readiness factors which pupils need to possess in order to write the type of poem being stressed as an objective of reading and writing instruction. If a pupil cannot do the writing of the intended poem, he/she may dictate the contents to the teacher or a peer for the actual writing. When necessary, accommodations need to be made for handicapped learners. Each pupil needs to attain as optimally as possible. Background knowledge is vital when poems are written. Thus, each pupil must possess knowledge which provides content for the written poem. The knowledge may come from the basal reader, library books, AV aids, specialists, as well as from internet sources.

A fourth type of rhymed verse for pupils to write is the quatrain. A quatrain contains four lines with all ending words rhyming or lines one and two as well as lines three and four rhyming. In observing a student teacher/cooperating teacher teach a set of fifth graders, a committee of four pupils brainstormed and then wrote the following quatrain:

The girl with a bright colored cap
sat down quietly to read a large map
into the room came a small kitten
carrying a broom, mop, and a mitten.

A fifth type of rhyme in poetry is the limerick. Motivated pupils tend to like all forms of rhymed poetry, but the limerick seems to add an interesting dimension. In limericks, lines one, two, and five rhyme (making for a triplet), as well as lines three and four rhyme which make for a couplet. The following limerick was written by two sixth graders:

The bells were ringing a merry tune
Along came a boy with a silver balloon
He walked fast and quickly
At the beginning he looked sickly
But he soon leaped as if to touch the moon.

It is soon apparent that pupils may make use of ideas read by writing diverse kinds of poetry. In addition to rhymed verse, pupils may also write unrhymed poetry, based on syllables. Haiku is a well known form of poetry which has three lines with a succession stressing five, seven, and five syllables per line respectively. Pupils, as a readiness factor, need to hear and divide words into syllables. A sixth grader wrote the following haiku, based on a social studies unit titled "The Middle East:"

The Dome of the Rock
Stood neatly on a steep hill
With a minaret.

A second haiku was written by a different set of sixth graders resulting in the following:

The wide Western Wall
Near to the Mosque el Aksa
Appear beautiful.

By adding two more lines to the haiku, the writer has completed a tanka. Each of these additional two lines contains seven syllables, as in the following tanka, also on "The Middle East:

The old stone tall church
called the Holy Sepulcher
aged and well renown
has many tourists each day
to show history.

Pupils need to make use of knowledge read by varying the kinds of learning opportunities provided. A good variation, from rhymed poetry and verse containing a certain number of syllables per line, is free verse. Free verse is quite open ended

and also has no particular ascribed length. The following, also pertaining to the social studies unit on "The Middle East," was written by a fourth grader:

The wall around Jerusalem is
two and one-half miles in length
forty feet high
enclosed with eight gates or entrances
filled with tourists when peace prevails
a busy place for buyers with its many small shops

Alliteration may be added to any written poem. With alliteration, two or more consecutive words in a poem need to start with the same beginning sound: busy buyers; small stalls (for shopping in the walled city); peaceful places. Poets use the device of alliteration frequently in written work.

Echoic sounding words, called onomatopoeia, may also be included in a poem: splish, splash, splush (as in rain falling from November to April in the Mediterranean climate in the Middle East). These three words also indicate alliteration.

Then too, many poets use imagery in writing poetry. Imagery emphasizes the use of creative comparisons in writing verse: The clouds look like fluffy pillows roaming up high. The creative comparison pertains to "The clouds look like" and "fluffy pillows roaming up high," (Ediger, 2000, Chapter Twelve).

Why Make Application of What Has been Read?

There are a plethora of reasons why pupils need to use and apply that which has been read. Among other reasons, the following are important:

1. it aids in retention and remembering with continued use.
2. it makes learnings practical.
3. it helps to expand learnings acquired to a new contextual use.
4. it assists pupils to perceive value in what has been learned.
5. it guides pupils to use words in diverse kinds of written work be it in creative, narrative, and/or expository writing.

Teachers need to help pupils use content acquired in reading by introducing new objectives, learning opportunities, and assessment procedures. Each of these three components of the curriculum need to be in evidence. Thus in assessing pupil achievement pertaining to what has been read, a portfolio may

be implemented and developed. The portfolio used in assessing pupil achievement may contain the following selected items by the involved learner with teacher guidance:

1. entries of different types of poetry written by the learner.
2. art products used to illustrate the different kinds of poems written.
3. snapshots of construction projects made to model selected poems written.
4. illustrated book covers and jackets made to enclose the portfolio.
5. cassette recordings made of the pupil reading aloud his/her poems to classmates.
6. video-tapes made of the involved learner working within a committee setting to plan and do dramatizations of written poems (Ediger, 1998, 4-8).

The teacher needs to assist pupils to use what has been learned. A variety of methods and learning opportunities need to be in the offing. Definite objectives of instruction need to prevail to emphasize pupil application of content learned. Evaluation techniques need to be used to indicate if the instructional objectives have been achieved.

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